

CHINA

Inclusive Education of China and Resource Classroom in Regular School

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I . Inclusive education and “learning in regular classroom” (LRC) of China

Since the 1980s, new concept of special education, such as “Integrating” “Returning to the mainstream” was accepted gradually in China. Influenced by these theories and practices, China began to set up an inclusive education system with China’s own characteristics, that is “Learning in Regular Classroom(LRC)” for disabled children.

In the September of 1988, “Learning in Regular Classroom” was brought forward formally in *the Outline of the Work for the Disabled in China During the 5-Year Plan Period (1988-1992)* which was issued by the State Council. In 1988, the Ministry of Education put forward to establish a new system about special educational system during the First National Conference of Special Education. In this system, the mainstay is special educational schools and the main body is LRC and special classes in regular schools. It showed the adjustment of government’s guidance objectives of special education.

In China, popularization of compulsory education and increasing the enrollment for children with disabilities are the most important goals to be emphasized. We cannot find a better way than LRC for the disabled children enrolled in schools when special education schools is not enough. But in practice, we have no enough expenditure for the necessary facilities and equipments for students with special education needs, no more details on the division staff, including resource room teachers, psychological counselors, physical therapists and other volunteers involved in individual education program of disabled children, just like developed countries. In China, special education resources and staffs are comparatively inadequate, regular schools pay more attention on students` academic achievement and the special needs of student are neglected.

II . Current situation of LRC in China

1. The basic situation of LRC schools

According the investigation, 35.8% of the counties and cities have less than 50% regular schools with LRC. 56.4% have more than 50% regular schools with LRC. About 7.8% of the local educational officials do not know the numbers of regular schools with LRC. The average students number of LRC schools is 1201.3. The average number of classes in LRC schools is 24.2. The size of class is 47.06 students. The average number of teacher and staff in LRC schools is 71.6, 60.5 teachers, 5.8 administrators and 5.3 staffs. On the average, there are 2.03 students with disabilities in one class. The type of LRC students is mental retardation (46.8%), learning with difficulties(17.7%), visual disability(8%), hearing disability (12.7%) and others such as physical disability, multiple disability (14.8%).

2. Support for LRC schools

By the survey, 74% of the counties (cities, districts) report that they have set special education funds, 19.8% have no such funds, 6.2% do not report. The other questionnaire comes from LRC schools showing that only 51.6% LRC schools have been funded. 49% LRC schools say that they have neither resource room nor resource teachers to give special or remedial instruction for students with disabilities. 13.4% LRC schools show that they have special teachers or counselors. 17.5% LRC schools say that there are special education teachers around.

Only 9.3% special schools' resource room is open to students of regular schools. 22.3% LRC schools don't have any connection or cooperation with special schools.

3. Basic situation of LRC teachers

According to the survey of LRC teachers, only 11.6% LRC teachers have special education background. Only 37.8% LRC teachers investigated say that they have received special education training, 62.2% say they have not.

III . Challenges of LRC

- **Funding:** There are a lot of LRC schools in undeveloped areas have not been provided with the basic support needed in the areas of teaching aids, studying tools and equipment (e.g. Braille textbooks) and related service (e.g. sign language instruction or speech therapy).
- **Classroom Size:** Classrooms usually have between 40 and 55 students. The class size is still too large for teacher taking care of every student.
- **Low Enrolment and high dropout:** There are still many children with disabilities not in school, especially in undeveloped regions where the enrolment rate is no more than 60% and dropout rate is very high.
- **Curriculum and teaching:** Curricular adjustment and adaptation of instructional materials and practices must be made to satisfied the special needs of students with disabilities. Moreover, many disabilities (e.g. learning disability, autism) are not recognized or diagnosed effectively.

IV . Utilization of resource classroom

1. Functions of resource classroom

- **Reception office area.** It is for receiving students and parents.
- **Assessment and consultation area.** It is for identifying learning difficulties and special education need, assessing students' potential abilities, consulting, making up individual education projects.
- **Observation and training area.** It is for students to carry out learning and rehabilitation activities by using of equipment, toys, teaching materials, etc.
- **Teaching research and teaching resources area.** It is for teachers to manage the files of students, design and manufacture teaching aids, prepare for lessons. It is also a teaching research center for special education teachers, specialists.

The efficiency of resource classrooms utilization can be improved through one space with multiple functions.

2. Duty of resource classroom teachers

- Resource classroom teachers be responsible for analyzing and evaluating the special needs of students.
- Resource classroom teachers draw up individual educational projects.
- Resource classroom teachers select and develop teaching materials and aids.
- Resource classroom teachers join the implementation of individual education plan.
- Resource classroom teachers provide help to other teachers, disabled children and their parents.

3. Procedure of students entering resource classroom

- Report: Teachers report the student in their class who need to be helped in the resource classroom.
- Diagnose: Organize teachers and resource classroom teachers and relevant persons (include the experts of the health and rehabilitation) to carry out diagnosing and analyzing.
- Keep record of the students which including the basic situation of the students, the results of the diagnosing, the former academic performance, and so on.

4. Operation of the resource classroom

- Establishing a special education office in LRC school. This office is responsible for making overall plans and arrangements for the education of disabled students and the utilization of resource classroom. Its members usually include vice principal, senior teacher, resource classroom teacher and relevant teachers and persons. Individual education plan of student with disabilities should be discussed and approved by the office.
- Students with disabilities mainly study in the regular classroom, supplement in the resource classroom. The time studying in the resource classroom should be kept under 40% time in the school.

5. Evaluation of resource classroom

Index of evaluation

| master index | detail index |
|---|--|
| management (1-6) | 1. Principals are responsible for management, operation of the resource classroom. |
| | 2. The work of resource classroom is brought into the whole plan of school. |
| | 3. There are rules or regulations of resource classroom. |
| | 4. There are training plan for resource classroom teachers. |
| | 5. There are home-school co-operation projects. |
| | 6. There are work plan to get support from society. |
| Operation (7-13) | 7. Analyze and diagnose the special needs of students. |
| | 8. Make up and carry out individual education plan. |
| | 9. Carrying out healing training for disabled students. |
| | 10. Help students with disabilities learning. |
| | 11. Supplying teachers teaching information. |
| | 12. Give professional support to the resource classroom teachers. |
| Equipments(14-15) | 13. Training and counseling for the parents. |
| | 14. Use of equipments |
| Comprehensive assessment of the utilization of resource classroom | 15. Management and maintenance of equipments |
| | (describe in word) |

Source: Qing Sulan, Liu Zaihua, Yang Xijie, He Er'shi, 2005

From the situation of LRC in China and utilization of resource classroom above, we can see although the system of inclusive education in China is imperfect and has suffered shortage of resources, utilization of resource classroom is vital to help disabled children integrated in regular schools.

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<Questions and Answers after Country Report>

Q1. Strategic plan of the Central Government

A1. - Focus on the plan of the compulsory education in all areas.

- Allocation of regular students and special students
- Planning building of 40 new special schools

Q2. Which schools are called LRC schools?

A2. LRC schools are those with disabled children learning in regular classes.

It may have resource rooms. Regular schools where children with disabilities are in special class are not considered as LRC schools.

Q3. Training and counseling for parents, is it only for parents of children with disabilities?

A3. LRC- Training, Consultation is only for parents of children with disabilities

Training of the parents is needed for successful education

Program of parents training is very important.

Training for parents of disabled children of all types

Q4. - Any similarities in the resource room management same as Onari Elementary School.?

A4. Big difference- As to resource room at Onari-elementary school, students come from regular classrooms. In China, resource room is only for children with disabilities, just like special classroom.

Q5. What is the national strategy to promote LRC?

A5. Six years ago- Ministry of education – issued documents to require local governments to build support system of LRC for disabled children to ensure quality of regular school. Documents in China are almost equal in its impact as the law.